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Declaration by the United Nations of 8 and 9 May as days of remembrance and reconciliation

Letter dated 2 May 2005 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In my capacity as representative of the country chairing the constituent bodies of the Commonwealth of Independent States, I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a proclamation by the heads of the States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States to the peoples of the Commonwealth countries and the international community in connection with the sixtieth anniversary of the victory in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945, dated 16 September 2004 (see annex) with a reservation made by the President of Azerbaijan at the time of approving the proclamation (see enclosure).

I should be grateful if you would arrange for this letter and its annex to be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 158.

(*Signed*) Andrey **Denisov**

* Reissued for technical reasons.

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Proclamation by the heads of the States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States to the peoples of the Commonwealth countries and the international community in connection with the sixtieth anniversary of the victory in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945

On 9 May 2005 the States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States will observe the sixtieth anniversary of the victory in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945. This war against the greatest evil known to mankind — fascism — was unprecedented in its scale and ferocity. It required enormous efforts and determination on the part of all the peoples of the Soviet Union.

In addressing the peoples of the Commonwealth countries and the international community on this occasion, we are proud that the peoples of our States made a decisive contribution to the achievement of the victory and to saving the peoples of not only Europe, but the entire world from fascist enslavement. It was they who sustained the greatest human and material losses in the war. Millions of people gave their lives for the sake of achieving victory.

We all owe an eternal debt to those who fell in the just and sacred war for the freedom and independence of the homeland, who travelled the arduous roads of war and routed fascism. It is our sacred duty to honour their heroic deeds and to continue work to perpetuate the memory of the fallen and preserve their places of everlasting rest in an appropriate manner.

Today we honour those who won the Great Victory and have lived to see this sacred anniversary, and we call for every concern to be shown to the generation of people who took part in the war.

The peoples' deep awareness of the real threat to the freedom and independence of each of them and of their common homeland — the Soviet Union, the fraternal friendship of the peoples, the organizing role of the country's supreme military and political leadership, the heroism and courage of the soldiers, partisans and underground fighters, and the self-sacrifice of the workers on the homefront, were decisive factors in the victory over fascism. This was our Great Victory.

The countries of the anti-Hitler coalition, whose peoples also sustained great losses, contributed to the rout of fascism. We trust that the States which took part in that war will continue to preserve and maintain war memorials, graves of Soviet soldiers, soldiers from the countries of the anti-Hitler coalition and participants in the resistance movement, and the burial places of the victims of fascism.

The States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States are actively cooperating to strengthen security and stability and are taking effective measures to combat new global challenges and threats. We believe that the further progression of mankind along the path of civilization should not be accompanied by the miseries and sacrifices of new wars.

In confirming our adherence to the fundamental principles and norms of the Charter of the United Nations, we advocate a peaceful solution of conflicts arising in the world, a strengthening of a spirit of trust and mutual understanding between States and peoples, and preservation of the key role of the United Nations in the maintenance of international security and in resolving major international problems, including counteracting any attempts to revive and spread fascism.

We confirm that the Commonwealth of Independent States will continue to do everything possible to strengthen cooperation in all areas with the entire international community in order to establish a just world and ensure the prosperity of the peoples, and we call upon the world community to unite its actions to achieve these noble goals.

Astana, 16 September 2004

Enclosure

Reservation made by the Republic of Azerbaijan to the proclamation by the heads of the States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States to the peoples of the Commonwealth countries and the international community in connection with the sixtieth anniversary of the victory in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945

In the last paragraph, replace the words "Commonwealth of Independent States" with "member States".

Ilham **Aliev**
President of the Republic of Azerbaijan